

U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Field Hearing

Wilmington, Delaware

June 20, 2011

I. Past Information / Intelligence Sharing

In 1988, when I began my career in law enforcement, there didn't seem to be much in the way of information sharing. Then, it was a matter of protecting your interests and it was believed the best way to do this was not to share information. We (law enforcement) were more concerned about jurisdictions and protecting what was ours than looking at the bigger picture and what was best for everyone. Fortunately for everyone, this appears not to be the case now and I believe our specialized units have helped to lead the way in this change. From my perspective, different Drug Units and SWAT Teams from local and state law enforcement agencies began working together out of necessity; they pooled their resources to accommodate long term investigations or operations. This not only led to increased information sharing, but to increased training with other agencies as well.

II. Present Information / Intelligence Sharing

Over the course of my 23 years with the Dover Police Department, technology, in my opinion, has had the greatest impact on information sharing among local and state law enforcement agencies. Twenty years ago a police officer was dispatched to a complaint, completed a handwritten report, turned it into his supervisor, who then sent it to the records division where it was stored and only shared when requested. Now officers are dispatched to a complaint either by computer or radio, they complete a computer based police report in the Law Enforcement Investigative Support System (LEISS), which is then available for anyone having access to the system throughout the state. The same is true for arrest warrants, officers now complete arrest warrants through a similar program which is available for all law enforcement agencies to review.

Statewide information and intelligence sharing has increased significantly over the years because of the Delaware Information and Analysis Center (DIAC). This fusion center is a key component of information sharing of criminal intelligence and supports statewide law enforcement investigations. The success of DIAC is largely due to the information support system it receives, not only from state agencies, but from regional and federal partners alike. In other words, you get out of it what you put into it.

I can think of no greater example of information and intelligence sharing for the State of Delaware than Dover Downs International Speedway. Twice a year Dover Downs hosts NASCAR events involving all three major racing series. On a normal day the population of the City of Dover is believed to be about 40,000 people. On these two weekends it rises to well over 300,000 people, including fans, race teams, vendors, and television support personnel. Following the tragedy of September 11, 2001, the NASCAR race at Dover Downs was the first major sporting event to be held anywhere in the nation. The success of that weekend and all those following is because of the teamwork between a private business, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. The Joint Operations Center (JOC) is a hub of activity every race weekend involving the collaboration of information being shared by the Dover Police Department, Delaware State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has become a significant partner in the information sharing business. Currently the FBI hosts a monthly information sharing meeting known as the "Policy Makers" briefing which is held at Dover Air Force Base. Senior law enforcement officials throughout the state and with the appropriate security clearance are invited to the briefing where terrorism information is passed on to those in attendance. Additionally, the Dover Police Department and the FBI have entered into a training agreement where we provide the training location and they supply the instructors for a wide variety of law enforcement related subjects. The Bureau also provided funding for technical upgrades to our existing training facility to support these training efforts. To this date, one class involving "Search & Seizure" has been taught and others covering various topics are in the planning stages. Select officers throughout the State of Delaware are given the opportunity to attend the FBI's National Academy in Quantico, VA, each year. This intensive 10 week course provides executive law enforcement training, as well as, a unique networking system because each session hosts approximately 250 law enforcement students from around the world. Because of the relationships formed during the session, information is shared by classmates throughout the nation and beyond long after graduation.

Currently, the Dover Police Department has two officers assigned full time to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) task force. This has been an ongoing relationship since the mid 1990's and is one we value very much. It is our belief that about 85% of our violent crime in Dover is tied one way or another to illegal drugs and because of the resources the DEA brings to the table we have managed to hold our ground in the war on drugs. As Chief of a 93 man department I could never afford to fund a long term investigation involving wiretaps and surveillance, but because of the resources that the DEA brings through both manpower and funding I am able to conduct these types of investigations. The obvious result of any of these investigations is the arrest of those involved, but what comes with that is the seizure of money, property and vehicles once owned by those arrested. As you well know, 80% of all assets seized during these investigations come back to the local or state law

enforcement partners taking part in the investigation. This is significant and provides the Dover Police Department with additional funding to support equipment purchases and training initiatives which ultimately come back to support the fight against the illegal drug trade. One recent example, with the support of the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Delaware State Police, the Dover Police Department is in the final stages of a major drug investigation involving illegal prescription medication (Percocet & Oxycodine). Thousands of pills were brought into the Dover area by an identified from over 1500 miles away. Because of the long arm of the DEA, we were able to arrest the dealers in this area as well as the supplier several states away. This case is expected to result in the seizure of millions of dollars in money, property, and vehicles, all of which will help support our ongoing efforts to combat illegal drugs.

The United States Marshalls Service and their Fugitive Recovery Team has been of great assistance to the Dover Police Department over the course of the last few months. On two separate occasions the Marshalls Task Force has responded to Dover and assisted in the recovery of two subjects wanted on several felony charges. The first subject was a known felon and was again wanted on several charges relating to receiving, possessing, and concealing stolen firearms. The second subject was wanted in connection with the ongoing rape of a 10 year old female. On both occasions, it was believed the subjects were staying in the area, but could not be located without the assistance of the Marshalls Task Force and the specialized equipment they make use of during these joint investigations.

It is not just these federal agencies described above who assist the Dover Police Department. There are several other examples such as, the ATF supplying a sketch artist which helped our Criminal Investigations Unit with a burglary investigation, the Secret Service conducting polygraph examinations or ICE helping with counterfeit merchandise and trademark violations. During the May NASCAR race this year, agents assigned to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency worked with undercover Dover Police Detectives and seized thousands of dollars worth of counterfeit merchandise and in the process uncovered an illegal gambling operation and seized thousands of dollars as a result. This has prompted an investigation by the Internal Revenue Service into the illegal gambling operations of the subjects arrested.

III. Future Information Sharing

With any program there is always room for improvement, but the collaboration between federal, state and local law enforcement in Delaware has to be an example for others to follow. I believe the size of our state has a lot to do with that and allows for direct communications at events each month such as the Delaware Policy Makers briefing and the Delaware Police Chiefs Counsel meetings.

IV. Funding Aid

The Dover Police Department is grateful for the funding supplied through the COPS Hiring Program. As a result of this funding the Dover Police Department was able to hire three 911 center dispatchers in 1997, four law enforcement patrol officers in 2002, two school resource officers in 2004, and one additional patrol officer in 2009. All those hired under the COPS Program are still employed and working full time for the Dover Police Department. Has this federal funding led to measurable public safety improvements, without a doubt? During each of the last five years I have seen a significant increase in the number of complaints assigned to my officers and without the support received through the COPS programs my department's ability to provide quality public service would have been diminished. The addition of these officers has given the Dover Police Department the flexibility to reallocate manpower to address specific problems in high crime areas. It has allowed us the option of adding officers to the Criminal Investigations Unit and the Drug Unit to support the growing trend of violent crime and gang activity in our city.

Currently, "SWAT" teams from throughout the state train together because of funding received through the department of Homeland Security. With this funding we were able to construct a training complex which is utilized to support the teams while helping them meet federal requirements for SWAT typing or classification.

In closing, I leave you with this, the cooperation between federal, state and local law enforcement continues to have a positive effect on crime in our communities. The benefits are obvious to those in law enforcement and have helped to improve the quality of life for the residents of Dover. It is vital that this cooperation between law enforcement agencies continue and I urge your continued support through funding sources such as the COPS program.

Sincerely,

Chief James E. Hosfelt Jr.

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